

I would have voted in favor of the Jackson-Lee amendment (rollcall No. 23).

I would have voted in favor of the motion to recommit (rollcall No. 24).

I would have voted against passage of H.R. 333, the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act (rollcall No. 25).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I was detained due to being with FEMA Director Joe Allbaugh to assess the damage caused by the earthquake in the Puget Sound. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 22, "no" on rollcall No. 23, "no" on rollcall No. 24, and "yea" on rollcall No. 25.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 333.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

AUTHORIZING THE CLERK TO MAKE CORRECTIONS IN THE ENGROSSMENT OF H.R. 333, BANKRUPTCY ABUSE PREVENTION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT OF 2001

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that, in the engrossment of the bill, H.R. 333, the Clerk be authorized to correct section numbers, punctuation, citations and cross references and to make such other technical and conforming changes as may be necessary to reflect the actions of the House in amending the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. BONIOR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I ask to take this time to inquire from the distinguished majority leader and ask him to clarify the schedule for the remainder of the day, the week, and next week.

I yield to my colleague, the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I am pleased to announce that the House has completed its legislative business for the week. The House will next meet for legislative business on Tuesday, March 6 at 12:30 p.m. for morning hour and at 2:00 p.m. for legislative business. No recorded votes are expected before 6 p.m. The House will consider a number of measures under suspension of the rules, a list of which will be distributed to Member's offices tomorrow.

On Wednesday, March 7, and Thursday, March 8, the House will consider the following measures: H.R. 624, the Organ Donation Improvement Act of 2001; and H.R. 3, the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Act of 2001.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to wish all of my colleagues a safe journey home for the weekend and a pleasant weekend with their families and constituents.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, if I may inquire from the gentleman from Texas, we have been hearing rumors on our side of the aisle that we will be denied an opportunity for a fair and fiscally responsible tax cut substitute when the bill reaches the floor next week. I ask the gentleman from Texas if that is indeed the case.

□ 1500

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman continue to yield.

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman asking that, and it is unfortunate when there are rumors that are upsetting the Members.

The fact of the matter is the rule that governs consideration of that bill will be drafted in the Committee on Rules, and there has been no determination from the committee regarding that. I really cannot, in fact, predict or even suggest what the rule would look like except that it would be, I should think, and we would expect it to be consistent with what the Committee on Rules has done in the past.

Mr. BONIOR. Well, I would say to my friend that that leads me to be even more suspicious of what may transpire next week or in the Committee on Rules.

I just want the gentleman from Texas to know that we would consider it a real breach of bipartisanship. And our reaction to not being able to offer on our side of the aisle, on behalf of 211 Members of Congress that represent quite close to half the population in this country, a substitute that would express our views on how we want to give money back to people, put money in their pockets, if that is not made available to us, I would assure the gentleman from Texas that there will be a very, very negative reaction on this side of the aisle.

I think that the gentleman, per his comments on precedent, can look back

and see that when there were examples of tax bills that came to the floor in the past, in fact when we were in the majority, did make available at various times, and I recall certainly during when President Bush was in the White House, during the late 1980s and early 1990s, we were able to do that for the minority. We expect to have the same kind of courtesy and the same type of response when we come to the floor next week.

We would be sadly and terribly disappointed and angry, if I might say so, if we do not have a chance to voice our view on behalf of 211 Members in our caucus.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will continue to yield, there certainly can be no failure on the part of this gentleman to perceive from the manner in which the gentleman from Michigan has just expressed that that would indeed be the case.

But the gentleman from Michigan, having served on the Committee on Rules while in the majority, must certainly be very well aware of the fact that the Committee on Rules does now, as it did then, take its responsibility and its prerogatives seriously. The rule will be written by the Committee on Rules in the Committee on Rules. I am just sorry to say that this gentleman cannot predict what the Committee on Rules will do at that time.

I am sorry that there is a rumor out there, but I have told the gentleman as candidly and straightforwardly as I can that the Committee on Rules has not met on this subject; that I have not discussed the subject of this rule with any member of the Committee on Rules; and I have no basis to project what the Committee on Rules would do except to observe what has been in fact the history of practices with the Committee on Rules with respect to rules of bills of this nature.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentleman from Texas, having served for 14 years on the Committee on Rules, the Committee on Rules is an extension of the leadership. It is a leadership committee. And I am sure the gentleman from Texas is not telling me on the floor this afternoon that he has no input into what is going to happen up in the Committee on Rules, because I know, and I think everybody in this institution knows, that the gentleman from Texas and the Speaker and the majority whip, in fact, do have an input, always have had an input on what decision is being made up in the Committee on Rules, especially on such an important issue as a major, major tax bill.

So we expect to be treated with dignity and with fairness, and that means having an opportunity, win or lose, to offer a substitute to what the President and the Republican Party wants to offer.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate the gentleman's point. I mean the

gentleman is being quite firm, but the fact of the matter is the chairman of the Committee on Rules does meet with the leadership, usually on Tuesday, to sit down and discuss a bill of this importance and the rule that would be drawn. And, yes indeed, in the Republican leadership model there is leadership input.

But the Committee on Rules is in fact a committee of very competent and able people who are quite able to make a final determination for themselves. That determination will be made by the Committee on Rules, and I do hope and expect with input, suggestions, recommendations from House leadership. I am just sorry to report to the gentleman there has been no such meeting now, and any rumors one has heard to the contrary should have very little credence in light of the fact that no such meeting to discuss this matter has taken place.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding to me, and I would like to ask a question of the distinguished leader, my friend from Texas.

There has been a decision made, apparently by the leadership to which you refer, that we shall not follow the precedent and the history of the House regarding having a budget on the floor and discussed and debated before we get into significant parts of the budget, as the gentleman has indicated next week we will be voting on H.R. 3, which is a major, major tax bill with tremendous implications for Social Security, Medicare, defense, agriculture, and many other areas.

My question to the gentleman is, Under what history and precedence of the House has the leadership decided to bring forward a major tax bill before we have had an opportunity to have a good bipartisan discussion of the budget?

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. ARMEY. I do appreciate the gentleman from Texas' inquiry. I believe if one sought history and precedence for this decision, which in fact I would find no need to seek, one could find that in the consideration of the marriage penalty bill just last year.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman continue to yield?

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I would advise the majority leader that that is precisely what bothers me about this particular decision this year. Because now we have a tremendous potential problem with dealing with projected surpluses of \$5.6 trillion,

70 percent of which will not occur until the years 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010. Yet next week I believe the leadership decision has been made that we are going to discuss the utilization of that.

I know the gentleman will say we are going to discuss giving back to the American people some of which they have already paid. I am for that. I know of no one as yet that is not for that. But it seems to me that we are getting the cart before the horse when we come with that bill first without first dealing with the budget so that we might in fact conservatively deal with the future economics of this country.

Mr. ARMEY. If the gentleman from Michigan will continue to yield, and I do appreciate the gentleman yielding for the points made by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM), but let me just say with regard to the President's budget proposal of \$1.6 trillion over the next 10 years in tax relief for the American people that we have under consideration in the Committee on Ways and Means right now a bill which would be only one of the seven items proposed by the President in his proposal that would amount to under \$1 trillion over the next 10 years. That would still leave a \$600 billion cushion between that and the budget, which we are confident will also, as passed by the House, call for \$1.6 trillion.

So there is ample room to be certain that whatever is passed in the House on this floor, on the subject of tax reduction for the American people, will fit nicely within the parameters of the budget that will be acted upon by this body.

Mr. STENHOLM. If the gentleman from Michigan will continue to yield briefly for the majority leader's response. Precisely why we are having this kind of discussion today in dealing with these kinds of numbers is why some of us feel very strongly that there is a tremendous mistake about to be made if we get into these kinds of decisions before we have had the kind of open and honest debate in the Committee on the Budget in a bipartisan way and on the floor of the House in a bipartisan way, before we have committed as yet undetermined projected surpluses.

Some of us feel very strongly that we are making a mistake, and I hope my friend from Texas will have a good two or three nights sleep on this question and will come to a little different conclusion before we make that mistake next week.

Mr. ARMEY. Again, I appreciate the comments made by the gentleman from Texas. I understand the concern he has. I served in this body for 10 years in the minority. For 10 years in the minority I often found that I had disagreements, oftentimes heartfelt disagreements, with the manner in which the majority scheduled the business of the House. But the one inescap-

able fact that I had to live with for all those 10 years was the fact that it was the majority's prerogative to schedule the business of the House.

Mr. BONIOR. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Speaker, I am not arguing with the scheduling of the business, although I agree with the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM). I would say to the majority leader that we should have a budget before we do this tax bill. It is what good common sense and what good families do when they plan their resource distribution. They put a budget down together before they decide on how they want to distribute it.

The President of the United States stood up there and gave a speech to us within the last week in which he quoted Yogi Berra when he said Yogi Berra said, "When you come to the fork in the road, you ought to take it." He probably should have quoted Yogi Berra when Yogi Berra said, "This is *deja vu* all over again." Because what we are about to do here, Mr. Speaker, without a budget first, we are going to go right to a tax bill where the numbers are in great dispute in terms of what the projections are going to be in the year 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010.

We do not know that. We cannot predict the weather in the years 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010. OMB has been wrong continually on their projections; and here we are rolling the dice like we did in 1981, assuming the money is going to be there, and the fact of the matter is we do not know that. That is why it is important for us to lay a budget out before we move ahead with a tax bill.

Now we are being told, not by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY), because he has been forthright and he has said he does not know what he is going to do on the rule, but I gather from the gentleman's remarks and what I have heard on the floor in the last couple of days, is we are going to be shut out of even offering what we think is a more responsible and fiscally prudent substitute to deal with that question of exploding deficits, particularly in the out years, and putting us back into the *deja-vu-all-over-again* 1981 situation that we found ourselves in, and which took 15 years to dig ourselves out of debt from.

So the gentleman needs to understand, and I hope he does from the passion in our voices here this afternoon, that we want to be treated fairly. And if we make our case and we lose on the House floor, fine, that is the way this place is supposed to work. But if we do not get a chance to offer on behalf of 211 Members who were elected, as the gentleman was and his colleagues were, we feel aggrieved and we should be angry about it.

So I just plead with the gentleman, as we start this new Congress with this very important bill, that the gentleman goes back to his leadership meeting with the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), the Speaker, the

gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), and whoever else is in there, the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) and the whole crowd, and the gentleman allows us to offer a substitute.

We know that the majority is probably going to win this vote. We are not naive. The gentleman has the majority on his side of the aisle. But we want the American people to understand that there is another viewpoint here. And for the gentleman to shut us off and not allow us to debate for at least an hour our view on a very important issue that is going to affect us perhaps for not only years but decades to come, I think it is, if I may say so, the height of irresponsibility and not in keeping with the bipartisan tone in which the President of the United States has been so proudly displaying and advocating over the course of the last couple weeks.

Mr. ARMEY. If I may, Mr. Speaker, let me just say the gentleman from Michigan makes a good point. I understand that rumors can be upsetting and I regret that. But I still, nevertheless, in light of the rumor, the gentleman is, on behalf of his party, correct to come to the floor and make the points he has made, and I respect that. I can only tell the gentleman with respect to that question, which I think is a very important question for him to raise here today, that the gentleman's views have been expressed very clearly here. I see no way that the Republican leadership in the Committee on Rules when they meet on that can be unaware of how strongly they have been expressed. Let me thank the gentleman for that.

If I may have just one more moment on the matter of the points raised by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) with respect to scheduling consideration of the tax bill relative to the budget bill.

□ 1515

His position is well known to us, has been well known to us, and has been expressed by people on this side of the aisle. We have been and are cognizant of that position as we plan the legislative schedule for the next few weeks. It is not a position that has not been considered. It is a position that has been weighed well, as raised by people on both sides of the aisle. Still in light of those considerations, we have made these scheduling decisions. We are quite comfortable to proceed on that. We understand that they will be disconcerting and upsetting to Members, but we believe in the interest of managing the business of this House, that is the best way to proceed and I would hope that the gentleman could accept that.

Mr. BOYD. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. BOYD. I thank the gentleman from Michigan for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, not to belabor the point, but I want to make a quick point that maybe has not been made. That is, that there are many on this side of the aisle that happen to agree with the President and many of the initiatives that he laid out in his speech on Tuesday evening and also in his budget he has presented, including strengthening our defense, including improving our educational system, including writing and implementing a prescription drug program, including helping assisting our veterans on their health care needs, including agricultural baseline needs that we know will exist, and also including his position on demeanor and the way he deals with people in a bipartisan way. It is refreshing. I know many of us on this side of the aisle have had many meetings with him since he has become President, including this Member, and with his staff to work on these issues.

I would simply say to the majority leader that I believe that most responsible people would think that it would be the proper thing to do to develop the budget, that is what the regular order of the rules of the House call for, prior to picking out a very small portion of that financial plan to pass which may seriously affect the way you do the other part. That is the only thing that I would say to the distinguished gentleman from Texas. There are a group of us that feel very strongly about that.

Mr. ARMEY. If the gentleman will yield further, again I appreciate that. I hope the gentlemen on his side of the aisle and my side of the aisle that feel so strongly in terms of this operational management model will abide with us in our interest of signaling to the American people on this tax reduction, this tax relief, that help is on the way. We want to get that signal out there early. We believe we can do that and be perfectly consistent with the requirement that in the end, as we work our way through this, it must all be reconciled to the budget that is passed by this body, the other body, and, of course, reconciled between the two bodies. There, of course, is no getting around that. So no matter how early we might act on any one part of it, in the end we will have that full reconciliation that I think would be a comfort to his concerns.

REPORT ON STATUS OF FEDERAL CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION ACTIVITIES—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMMONS) laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on Government Reform:

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to section 1053 of the Defense Authorization Act of 2001 (Public Law 106-398), enclosed is a comprehensive report detailing the specific steps taken by the Federal Government to develop critical infrastructure assurance strategies as outlined by Presidential Decision Directive No. 63 (PDD-63).

This report was drafted by the previous Administration and is a summary of their efforts as of January 15. However, since this requirement conveys to my Administration, I am forwarding the report.

Critical infrastructure protection is an issue of importance to U.S. economic and national security, and it will be a priority in my Administration. We intend to examine the attached report and other relevant materials in our review of the Federal Government's critical infrastructure protection efforts.

GEORGE W. BUSH.
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 1, 2001.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, MARCH 5, 2001

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 2 p.m. on Monday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Tennessee?

There was no objection.

HOOR OF MEETING ON TUESDAY, MARCH 6, 2001

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns on Monday, March 5, 2001, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 6, 2001, for morning hour debates.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Tennessee?

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Tennessee?

There was no objection.

CELEBRATING 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF PEACE CORPS

(Mr. FARR of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)